

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 614

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mr. Steve Lacy of
Johnson City.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should pause to remember the accomplishments of those Tennesseans who during their lifetimes served their fellow citizens with the utmost integrity, dedication, and ability; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Steve Lacy was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, a native of Sullivan County, he was a longtime resident of Johnson City, and a highly respected member of the community; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy was the son of Samuel C. and Allie Barnes Lacy; Samuel Lacy began a legacy of public service that his son continued to foster throughout his own life; and

WHEREAS, Steve Lacy graduated from Holston High School at the top of his class; he graduated as valedictorian and enrolled at Milligan College in 1927 on an academic scholarship; and

WHEREAS, his strong ties to Milligan began in his early years as a student; he was named Best Citizen, was elected as Best All-Around Boy, and was a stellar athlete on the

school's championship football and basketball teams; he was the captain of the basketball team during his senior year and was named to the all-conference team; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy graduated cum laude from Milligan in 1931; from the fall of 1931 through the spring of 1932 he rendered outstanding service as a teacher and coach at Mary Hughes High School in Sullivan County, and in the fall of 1932, at the age of 24, he was elevated to the position of principal; and

WHEREAS, in 1933, Milligan College called upon this most remarkable alumnus to serve as athletic director and head football coach, and also to be responsible for the baseball team, track, and women's basketball; and

WHEREAS, his unparalleled athletic achievements included winning three football conference championships, and being the only coach in the history of the Smoky Mountain Athletic Conference to win championships in four sports; and

WHEREAS, from 1943 to 1948, Mr. Lacy served with acumen and alacrity as Dean and Vice-President of Milligan College, in which positions he earned the respect of faculty, students, and staff alike for the superior quality of his work; and

WHEREAS, after his resignation in 1948, he utilized his talents in the business world; he held interests in the wholesale oil business, fast food franchises, trucking, and real estate; and

WHEREAS, no matter where Steve Lacy was, his dedication and commitment to Milligan College never abated; soon after resigning as Dean he was named to the Board of Trustees and during his tenure on the board he made numerous important contributions to the life of the college; and

WHEREAS, his diligence and meritorious service as chairman of the committee to pursue accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools gained the college full accreditation in 1960; and

WHEREAS, as chairman of the Board of Trustees, he also fostered tremendous growth and success for Milligan; the endowment fund nearly doubled, the library added 30,000

volumes, and seven buildings were constructed during his 13-year tenure from 1961 to 1974; and

WHEREAS, in 1963, Milligan College conferred upon Mr. Lacy the Honorary Doctor of Law degree, awarded him the Fide et Amore medal in 1975, and in the same year dedicated the Steve Lacy Fieldhouse in his honor; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy was affiliated with Milligan College for over 70 years; it has been said that: "Steve Lacy's contributions to Milligan do not consist of brick and mortar or any other 'things.' They consist of mind and soul, and emotion. They consist of commitment and tenacity and faith. They consist of love"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy exemplified the spirit and allegiance to family and community that is characteristic of a true Tennessean; a mere sampling of his community work includes meritorious service as the president of the Junior Chamber of Commerce in Johnson City; he was also a member of the Board of Directors of the Senior Chamber of Commerce, and of the Kiwanis Club, and he served his fellow citizens with the utmost acumen and integrity as a member and Chairman of the Washington County Election Commission; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy had a significant impact on countless activities in his community and state; he was instrumental in securing university status for East Tennessee State College, in securing state approval for the medical school at East Tennessee State University, and in establishing Green Valley Developmental Center; and

WHEREAS, he received numerous awards in recognition of his efforts; he was inducted into the Johnson City Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame, the Milligan Sports Hall of Fame, Northeast Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame, and Tennessee Sports Hall of Fame, and was honored with the Distinguished American Award by the National Football Foundation, and the highest citizen award given in the Volunteer State, the Governor's Outstanding Tennessean Award; and

WHEREAS, also known as “Mr. Democrat,” Steve Lacy was an adviser to many Democratic office holders including Vice-President Al Gore, former Governor Ned McWherter and former U.S. Senator Jim Sasser; and

WHEREAS, he was also considered a good friend by members of the Republican Party; Congressman James Quillen has said of him: “Steve should be remembered for his civic pride and civic activities that were always devoted to the cause of others”; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy was an active and devout member of the First Christian Church, which he served faithfully for over 60 years; and

WHEREAS, he was also deeply devoted to his family, and always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife Martha, whom he married in 1935. Mr. Lacy once stated: "None of this could have happened unless I'd had a wife who was a great inspiration to me and worked with me in all my activities. She has been my companion and guide"; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy was the proud parent of a son, Michael Stephen Lacy, grandfather of Gloria Dudney, Robert Lacy, Stephen M. Lacy, Andrew Lacy, Alexandra Lacy, and Victoria Lacy, and great-grandparent of three children; and

WHEREAS, during a memorial service for Mr. Lacy, the impact of this incredible man's life was most appropriately stated: “He demonstrated so well Jesus' point of the parable of the Good Samaritan. He was not bothered by the question, ‘Who is my neighbor?’ Rather, he was concerned with the question of whose neighbor could he be. The answer was anyone, rich or poor, black or white, Republican or Democrat, educated or uneducated, who needed his help”; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Lacy leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life and diligence and dedication in all chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Mr. Steve Lacy — teacher, athlete, administrator, counselor, businessman, politician, public servant and friend, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Lacy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.